



COMMANDER FLEET ACTIVITIES SASEBO

SECTION ONE INTRODUCTION

1. PURPOSE

This handbook covers the most important features of U.S. and Japanese traffic laws as they apply to U.S. Armed Forces personnel driving a vehicle in Japan. It is not intended to be a complete summary of all traffic regulations.

2. GENERAL

- a. The operation of a privately owned vehicle (POV) in Japan is a conditional privilege extended to military personnel, sponsored civilian employees, and their family members by the Commander, Fleet Activities, Sasebo. Being a privilege, everyone should be aware that this privilege, like so many others, could be revoked either by traffic court or by your Commanding Officer. Your Commanding Officer has the right to revoke this privilege without the need for any other administrative action to be taken against you.
- b. The operation of a privately owned vehicle in Japan also carries significant risks. Under Japanese law drivers of motor vehicles are considered professionals, and traffic accidents which result in personal injury or death frequently lead to criminal prosecution under Article 211 of the Penal Code of Japan "In case of serious injury or death, drivers who are the least bit negligent may be charged. The successful resolution of such cases requires of customary condolence call and the payment of compensation through insurance or out of the pocket". The operation of a privately owned vehicle also exposes U.S. Armed Forces personnel to prosecution by Japanese authorities for DUI / DWI, speeding, and other traffic offenses. The Japanese criminal justice system is very different from our own and can be a difficult experience. All personnel are therefore advised to carefully weigh the decision to apply for a POV (SOFA) license. Personnel on unaccompanied tours who do not have a particular need for a POV should consider opting not to obtain a POV SOFA license.
- c. Once a driver's license has been granted and the duties and responsibilities of a driver technically accepted, it is that individual's responsibility to do everything in their power to drive without having a traffic accident. In order to do so, the driver must keep his/her attitude and car in good condition at all times.

3. ROAD SIGNS

The road signs in Japan are international road signs. A handout of road signs is available at the Driver's Licensing Office.

SECTION II
JAPANESE TRAFFIC LAWS

1. Traffic Lanes

- a.** A primary traffic rule in Japan is that vehicles always keep to the left side of the road. However, vehicle may partially cross or entirely cross to the right half of the road in the following cases:
 - 1) Whenever you are on a multilane road, or the road is open to one way traffic only
 - 2) Whenever the width of the left half of the road is insufficient for a vehicle to proceed
 - 3) Whenever a vehicle is unable to proceed on the left half of the road due to road damage, road construction work, or other impediments
 - 4) Whenever attempting to pass another vehicle on a road where the width of the left half is less than six meters and road conditions permit passing

- b.** A solid or broken white line in the center of the road marks the center line, and vehicle may pass other vehicles under the conditions of (3) and (4) above; however, vehicles will be driven so that crossing over the centerline is kept to a minimum. The following markings on the roadway prohibit passing:
 - 1) Yellow center line – No passing for either side.
 - 2) Yellow line on both sides of the centerline – No passing for either lane.
 - 3) Yellow line on one side of the centerline – No passing for the lane in which the a yellow line appears.

- c.** Whenever the sidewalk is separated from the road way, all vehicles must travel on the roadway, however, a vehicle may cross a sidewalk when there is no other way to enter the facility or location.

- d.** When paragraph c. above applies, the vehicle must come to a complete stop before proceeding onto a sidewalk. Pedestrian traffic on the sidewalk has the right of way at all times.

- e.** Vehicles must not be driven into safety zones at any time.

- f.** All motor vehicles are required to come to a complete stop at all railroad crossings and before proceeding looks both ways to ensure tracks are completely clear.

- g.** Specific Lanes Designed for Various Types of Vehicles. On a road where vehicle traffic lanes are provided, vehicles are required to travel in the specific lanes designated for that type of vehicle.

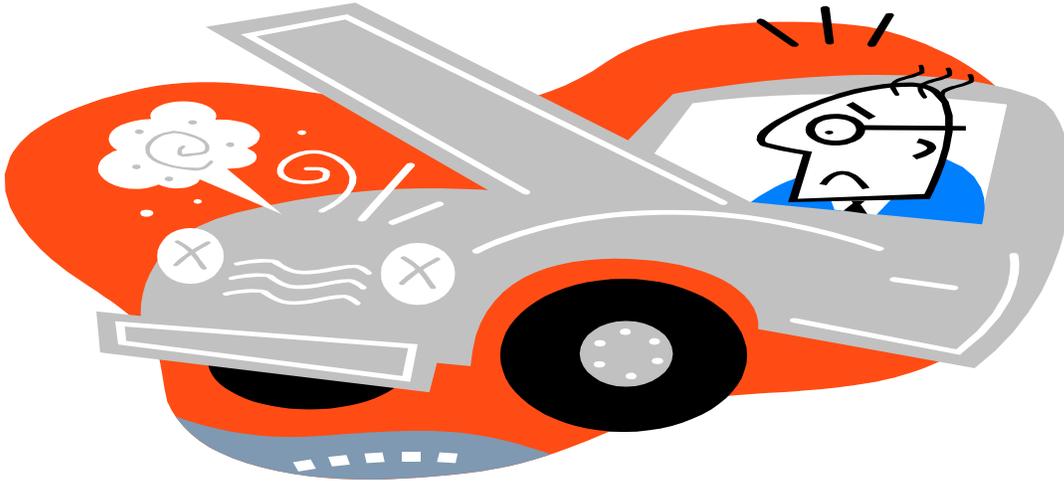
- h.** Passing of Vehicles in Public Bus Priority Lanes. In lanes designated by road markings as priority lanes for public buses, school buses, and taxi cabs:

- 1) Other vehicles are required to move out of the priority lane instantly when a bus approaches from the rear.
 - 2) No other vehicle can travel in the priority lane when difficulty may arise in moving out of the priority lane when a bus approaches from the rear.
- i. **Bus Exclusive Lanes.** Bus exclusive lanes are for buses and taxicabs with passengers. Only time you are allowed in the bus exclusive lane with your automobile is if you have to make a left hand turn. In this instance, you can move into the bus exclusive lane just prior to your turn, provided you do not interfere with a bus or taxicab coming up from your rear.
 - j. **Protection of Public Buses Leaving Bus Stops**
When a public bus is signaling to leave a bus stop, no vehicle will interfere with the bus doing so unless the vehicle will be required to change its speed or direction of travel abruptly. You should remember that you are a professional driver, and professional drivers never have to change their speed or direction of travel abruptly.



- k. Motorcycles are sometimes restricted to the far left-hand lane on multilane roads except within 30 meters (100 feet) of making a right hand turn. Japanese traffic laws require that all motorcyclists wear HELMETS regardless of the size of the motorcycle. In addition to wearing a helmet, goggles or a face shield are required, along with a long sleeve shirt / jacket, gloves, long legged trousers and boots or shoes which over the ankle. The Navy requires operators to wear a reflective vest on and off Base. This vest must be yellow or international orange with reflective material on the front and back. Passengers are also required to wear this same type of vest and all safety equipment.
2. **Traffic Rules for Vehicles, etc., on Normal Roads**
- a. **Methods for Travel Designated by Road Markings.**
 - 1) Vehicles will not enter any area of the roadway that is marked off to preclude vehicular traffic.

- 2) Vehicles must come to a complete stop at all stop lines when they are provided, and at crosswalks, or uncontrolled intersections where stopping is required.
 - b. Traffic Lane on Multiple Lane Roads. When there are three or more lanes provided in the same direction, the right most lanes is a passing lane; however, vehicles can travel in other lanes in accordance with their speed as designated by the Japanese law.
 - c. Prohibition of Changing Direction of Travel. No Vehicle can change its direction of travel without sufficient reason regardless of whether a turning lane is provided or not.
3. **Traffic Rules for Motor Vehicles on National Motor Vehicle Expressways and exclusive roads for Motor Vehicles**
- a. Any motor vehicle intending to enter the main lane roadway must use the speed accelerating lane if provided.
 - b. Any motor vehicle intending to leave the main lane roadway must travel in the closest to the exit or use the speed-decelerating lane if provided.
 - c. Japanese traffic laws require occupants in the front and back seats of a private motor vehicle to wear their seat belts at all times, however, CFASINST 5800.1B states: “All personnel operating or riding in private motor vehicles shall wear their seat belts at all times.” This applies to off base as well as when you are on a military installation.
 - d. Any motor vehicle attempting to enter a main lane roadway must not obstruct the passage of vehicles already traveling in the main lane roadway.
 - e. Being a good driver, it is your responsibility to ensure that your vehicle has the proper amount of items such as, fuel, oil, and coolant, and that the cargo etc. is properly secured prior to traveling on the national expressways and roads exclusively for vehicles. Should you violate this provision by not meeting the requirements and run out of gas, or break down, and have to leave your vehicle on or alongside of the main travel lane, you will be subject to penalty. You will also be subject to fine and penal action should any part of a load you are carrying fall or be dispersed or scattered on the roadway, subject to a maximum of three month penal servitude and/or a maximum fine of approx. 50,000 yen. (Violations of driver obligations while operating on the national expressways, etc.)
 - f. Should you have to stop your vehicle due to malfunction or breakdown, etc. on traffic lanes, the road shoulder or zone alongside of a national expressway, etc. you must clearly indicate that your motor vehicle is so stopped by the use of an emergency warning device.
 - g. Vehicles traveling on the national expressways must be equipped with a triangular warning device and a road flare. Warning devices are available at the exchange service station. They are also available on the local economy.
 - h. If you must stop your vehicle on the national expressway at night, you are required to turn on your parking lights or emergency flashers. Even though it is not required, it is recommended that you use your emergency flashers or parking lights any time your vehicle breaks down, on the national expressway or not.



4. Speed Limits

- a. As contained in the Japanese Road Law, the maximum speed limits for motor vehicles operating outside U.S. Armed Forces installations are as follows unless otherwise posted:
 - 1) For most of vehicles other than all specialized vehicles (e.g. wreckers), the maximum speed is 60 kilometers per hour.
 - 2) For any two – wheeled vehicle under 50cc displacements, the maximum speed is 30 kilometers per hour.
- b. When you operate your vehicle on a high speed highway, or any section of a road so designated by the public safety commission, you will not operate your vehicle slower than the minimum posted speed limit unless the reduction of speed is prudent due to road or weather conditions.
- c. When you are operating your vehicle in Japan, you will probably notice that your speed is now figured in kilometers rather miles per hour. A kilometer is approximately five-eighths of a mile or one kilometer is approximately 0.62 miles. For example, the number “50” on a speed limit sign doesn’t mean 50 miles per hour, but 50 kilometers, or approximately 31 miles per hour. Speedometers on all Japanese and most European cars register in kilometers rather than in miles.

**JAPANESE TRAFFIC SIGNS INDICATE LEAGAL SPEEDS IN
KILOMETERS PER HOUR, NOT MILES PER HOUR**

Kilometers

20

Miles

12

25	16
30	19
35	22
40	25
45	28
50	31
55	34
60	37
70	44
80	50
90	56
100	62

5. Distance Between Vehicles

Whenever you are following another vehicle, Japanese law requires that you maintain enough distance to prevent colliding with the vehicle immediately in front of you if it should suddenly come to a halt. You should always follow the minimum four – second rule to ensure you are keeping a safe following distance. Whenever you intend to change your direction or traffic lane, Japanese law requires you to ensure that there is enough distance between your vehicle and the vehicle approaching from the rear. This is to prevent the latter from running into your vehicle if you should suddenly come to a halt upon changing your direction or traffic lane. Before changing lanes, look over your shoulder to check blind spots, not just in your mirrors.



6. Passing

- a. Passing violations cause a high percentage of accidents. Extreme care must be used at all times when passing another vehicle.
- b. A vehicle attempting to overtake and pass another vehicle must pass on the right side of the vehicle being overtaken. Passing on the left is prohibited except when a vehicle is stopped and turning to the right and it is safe to pass on the left. Here are few “Passing Don’ts:”
 - 1) Do not pass the vehicle ahead of you if the driver indicated he or she intends to pass or appears about to pass another vehicle (dual passing).

- 2) Do not pass if the vehicle ahead is proceeding parallel with and at same speed (side by side) as another vehicle.
 - 3) Passing is also prohibited:
 - (a) At intersections
 - (b) On turns or curves
 - (c) Near the top of upgrades and on steep downgrades
 - (d) Inside tunnels and at railroad crossings
 - (e) In “No Passing” zones, so marked by road signs.
 - 4) Where passing is prohibited, changing the direction of travel for passing or traveling past the front vehicle is also prohibited.
 - 5) Passing is also prohibited on crosswalks and intersection, or within 30 meters (Approx. 100 feet) of them. Passing, however, in an intersection and in the area within 30 meters (approx. 100 feet) from it is not prohibited for any vehicle traveling on a priority road. Priority road are identified by a center line or lane dividing lines drawn in the intersection.
- c. Vehicle drivers will not cut into lanes of traffic that are proceeding slowly or are stopped. This applies not only to intersections, but any place where traffic is proceeding at a slow pace.
- d. A vehicle must not overtake or pass another motor vehicle within 30 meters of a crosswalk. (Overtaking and passing are two different actions under Japanese law.) “Passing,” means going around the vehicle in front on a two – way street by passing them on the right. Overtaking refers to one vehicle going past another vehicle on a one way or multilane road.

7. Parking and Stopping

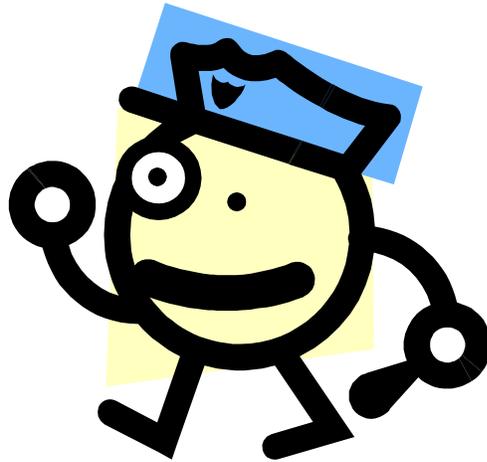
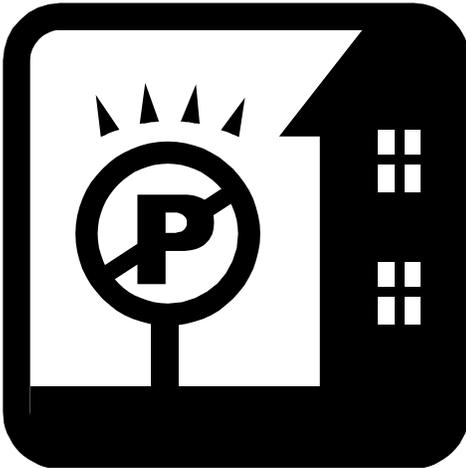
- a. “No parking zone” has a definite purpose. They are designed to keep traffic moving smoothly. It is true that parking spaces are sometimes difficult to find, particularly in the larger cities, but that is no excuse for parking in a no parking zone.
- b. Drivers are cautioned not to stop or park their vehicles at place on the road such as the ones listed below, except when coming to a temporary stop in accordance with the law, or in compliance with an order from a police officer or to avert danger. Drivers should not stop or park:
 - 1) At an intersection, bus stops or crosswalks.
 - 2) Within five meters or less from the outer perimeter (edge) or an intersection or a corner of a road.
 - 3) At the left side of a safety zone, or within ten meters or less from either end of safety zone on a road, if so provided.
 - 4) Within ten meters or less from signpost or signboard indicating a bus stop or railroad crossing. (This applies only during the operational hours of buses.)

- 5) Near the top of an upgrade.
 - 6) On a steep grade.
 - 7) Within five meters of a pedestrian crosswalk either side.
 - 8) At any other place the Public Safety Commission has interest of safety and to promote safe and orderly traffic.
- c. When parking where parking meters are installed, you are required to activate the meter. Meters are installed to limit the time you can legally park, therefore, if you exceed the time limit, you are considered to be illegally parked.
 - d. The fine for illegal parking or stopping is 15,000 yen.
 - e. As of June 1st 2006, if you are illegally parked you will receive a ticket immediately and possibly towed also. If the driver fails to pay the fine for illegal parking, the owner will not be able to complete automobile inspection procedures. If your car is towed, you will be required to pay for the towing charge and storage fees. All charges must be paid before you can recover your vehicle.
 - f. When parking on Japanese roads, all drivers must obey the laws of the locality. Personnel cited for illegal parking by the Japanese police will also be assessed points against their USFJ form 4EJ. Off base residential parking must have enough space to accommodate the number of vehicles registered. Personnel cited for illegal parking by the Japanese police will also be assessed points as well.

8. Prohibited Parking

- a. Parking your vehicle in any of the places listed below is a violation of Japanese law if permission to park is not received from the chief of a police station.
 - 1) Within 3 meters or less from a motor vehicle entrance or exit way adjoining a road where a facility is established or space is allocated outside the road for taking on or discharge people, loading or unloading cargo, parking or motor vehicle storage or repair.
 - 2) Within five meters or less from a fire station or from the side of a water reservoir used for fire – fighting, or from the entrance or exit way of the above adjoining road.
 - 3) Within five meters or less from a fire hydrant or any water supply identified for firefighting purposes.
 - 4) Within one meter or less from a fire alarm.
 - 5) Within five meters or less from either end or side of a construction project or a road that is under construction

- 6) All roadways within U. S. Armed Forces installation are designed as fire lanes and parking on them is prohibited except when authorized. Also, parking in grassy areas on U. S. Armed Forces installation are prohibited.
 - 7) Parking on base is only authorized in approved parking spaces; parking violations are our biggest offense on base.
- b. No vehicle will be parked in any place where there is less than 3.5 meters of space remaining on the road on the right side of the vehicle. However, this does not apply when a driver does not leave their vehicle or stops to load or unload cargo, or when the driver leaves their vehicle but is able to commence operation immediately, or when such parking is necessary for the rescue of sick or wounded persons.



9. Passage of Vehicles at Intersections

- a. Right of way at an uncontrolled intersection:
 - 1) Any vehicle on a priority road has the right – of – way.
 - 2) Any vehicle traveling on a wider road has the right – of – way.
 - 3) Any vehicle approaching the intersection on the left has the right – of- way over the vehicle on the right.
 - 4) Any roadway with center line or vehicle traffic lanes provided through the intersection is the priority road and has the right – of – way.
- b. Any vehicle entering the intersection is required to pay attention to other vehicles in the intersection as well as pedestrians crossing the road in or close to the intersection. Additionally, all vehicles must travel at the safest possible speed, and in the safest possible manner, while in an intersection in accordance with conditions of the intersection.

- c. Vehicle must not enter an intersection, even if you have a green traffic signal, if it will become necessary for you to stop in the intersection due to traffic condition ahead, e.g. rush hour traffic.
- d. When intending to travel through a crosswalk, railroad crossing, or other portion of the road marked off with road markings; vehicle will not enter it if they may have to stop in it due to traffic conditions.
- e. A left turn on a red light after a complete stop is AGAINST JAPANESE TRAFFIC LAWS, except when permitted by a traffic control device (green signal arrow or a white sign with a blue arrow).

10. How to Stop

- a. When a vehicle is stopped to take on or discharge people or to load or unload cargo, it must be stopped as close as possible to the left edge of the roadway and in such a manner that it will not impede other traffic. However, on a one – way street, and if designated by the Public Safety Commission, you may park your vehicle along the right of the roadway.
- b. No operator of a vehicle can make an abrupt stop or apply their brakes suddenly except when it is unavoidable to avert danger.

11. How to Park.

When you park your vehicle, you must park on the left side of the road in such a manner that it will not interfere with the flow of traffic on the roadway. Whenever the roadway and sidewalk are not separate, and when designated by the Public Safety Commission, Your vehicle must be parked along the left edge of the road, 0.5 meters from the edge. When parking your vehicle, the hand brake should always be set.

12. Limitation on Parking Time.

The Public Safety Commission may designate a parking place and impose a time limit on continuous parking of the same vehicle in the same area, whenever necessary because of road or traffic conditions.

13. Measures Against illegal Parking

- a. A police officer may order an operator of a vehicle to move their vehicle or to park it in a different manner whenever it appears that the vehicle will seriously obstruct traffic or cause a traffic hazard. When the operator is not near the vehicle, the officer may have the vehicle moved up to 50 meters from where it was parked.
- b. When moving the vehicle 50 meters does not prevent the traffic hazard, or promote orderly traffic flow, the police officer will report the situation to the chief of the police station which has jurisdiction over the area where the vehicle is parked. The chief of the police station then assumes custody of the vehicle. Any expense incurred for moving the vehicle, assuming custody, or posting of public notices WILL be borne by the owner or user of the vehicle.
- c. Whenever the chief of the police station assumes custody of a vehicle under the above

conditions, he will notify the owner or user of the date and time that custody was assumed and where the vehicle is held. The chief of the police station will take necessary measures for the prompt return of the vehicle to its owner or user. If the name and address of the owner or user of the vehicle cannot be ascertained, a public notice will be posted as prescribed by a Cabinet Order.

14. Signals

- a. When making a left turn, right turn, U-turn, or crossing, slowing down, stopping, backing up, or changing lanes, while proceeding in one direction, you, as a good driver, are required to render the proper direction indicator (turn signal) or hand signal at least 30 meters prior to your intended action, and you must continue the signal until you have completed your action. Erroneous signaling (such as signaling for a right and then going left) is punishable under Japanese law.
- b. Once you have completed your turn or other changing action, you must ensure that your signal cancels, or you deactivate the signal yourself. Using your signal when you do not actually change your direction of travel is also prohibited e.g. leaving your left or right signal on when parked alongside of the road.

15. Use of Horn.

As a good driver, you must not sound your horn except when it is required by law or when it is essential in order to avert danger.



16. Rules of the Road to be Observed by Operators

- a. As a professional driver, you must take all necessary measures to prevent items from falling off or scattering from your vehicle.
- b. Prior to opening your vehicle door, you must ensure that it can be done safely without interfering with, or causing a hazard to traffic. You also must ensure that your passengers do not open their doors or get out of your vehicle without ensuring they can do it safely.
- c. You also must take all necessary actions to ensure that your vehicle is not stolen or used without your permission, i.e., removing your ignition key and locking the steering wheel, and locking all doors.

17. Keep Your Vehicle in Good Shape

- a. All motor vehicles come off the assembly line missing one very important item, an item you can't buy at auto parts store A BRAIN. Your vehicle can't steer itself, and it has no

idea when it needs required repairs. It doesn't know when its tires are worn, or when it is need of a tune – up or its brakes aren't working properly. You as a good driver know the importance of having your car in proper running order, but you keep putting it off by saying, "I'll take care of it on payday." It seems payday never comes. Don't wait until it's too late to repair your car.

- b. Under Japanese road laws, Police officers have the right to avert traffic danger by pulling a vehicle off to the side of the road when it is not mechanically fit to be on the road. The officer then may give the driver an itemized list of what needs to be done to make the vehicle safe. If the officer deems necessary, he may affix a sticker to the front of the unsafe vehicle is in need of maintenance. No person may remove the sticker until after all discrepancies on the vehicle have been corrected and approval to remove the sticker has been received from the nearest Land Transportation Office.
- c. Japanese law requires every vehicle to be inspected every two years.
 - 1) Vehicle over ten years old must inspected every year. No person whose vehicle fails to meet the established standards will receive a safety inspection decal. Any vehicle which does not pass the safety inspection, or has had the safety inspection decal expire, may not be operated.



18. Always Carry Proper Driving Forms

- a. The only driver's license valid and used in Japan by U.S. Armed Forces personnel while operating privately owned vehicles is the USFJ Form 4 (Operator's permit for civilian vehicles).
- b. To receive the USFJ Form 4, You must report to COMFLEACT Sasebo, Safety Department with a valid stateside (or U.S. territory) driver's license and satisfactorily complete required examinations. All applicants must attend Base Indoctrination classes prior to receive license. E4 and below must have a request chit signed by their CO or OIC for the USFJ Form 4 and for GOV license. Any persons under the age of 26 must also submit a certificate after taking the NKO "Driving for Life" course.
- c. The forms you are required to have operating a privately owned vehicle are as follows: USFJ Form 4; military registration and certificate of title of motor vehicle (DD Form 430); Japanese Vehicle Inspection Card and Tax stamp; Vehicle Registration Decal (The Japanese Inspection Decal will be displayed in the middle portion of the windshield behind the interior rear view mirror); and if the vehicle is operated by anyone, other than the owner or member of the owner's family, for more than 24 hours, that individual must have a power of attorney authorizing their use of the vehicle.

- d. Every owner of a privately owned vehicle within the U.S. Forces in Japan must carry two types of insurance providing coverage both on and off military installations.
 - 1) The first type, a minimum of 3,000,000 yen property damage, is required by U.S. Military regulation and may be purchased from an authorized Japanese firm.
 - 2) The second is a 30,000,000 yen or more liability policy required by Japanese law. It must be purchased from a firm licensed by Japan. Japanese law requires vehicle owners to carry in their car at all times a form certifying that the second type of policy has been purchased and is paid and current.
- e. No one may operate a motor vehicle or motorized bicycle without an operator's permit.

19. What to do in Case of an Accident.

Despite traffic laws and precautions taken by drivers, accidents will still happen. If you become involved in an accident, whether it is your fault or not, you should know what to do. If you as the driver are involved in an accident, you must stop, identify yourself, and exchange personnel data with others involved. If the traffic accident involves minor property damage or more you must, unless incapacitated, attend to the injured to the best of your ability and not leave the scene of the accident until military and/or civil law enforcement personnel authorize your departure. You are required to report all accidents (major and minor) to the nearest Military Police Office in the area in which the accident occurred. Civil law also requires that a report of an accident be submitted immediately to local civil police authorities. No person may operate a vehicle while under the influence of alcohol, physical strain, or the effects of a medicine or any other drug.

20. Watch for Pedestrians

- a. Being a good driver, you must operate your vehicle in such a manner as to not splash mud or water on pedestrians. Splashing of mud or water on a pedestrian is a violation of the law, and can be prevented by slowing down.
- b. When you see a blind or deaf person walking with their white cane, or a child is walking without any attending guardian, you must make a temporary stop or slow down and not interfere with their passage or walking.

NOTE: Japanese children are taught to raise their arm in the air when they need vehicles on the roadway to stop. You as a driver have to watch out for these children as they have a habit of not looking or stopping before they cross the street.

- c. Whenever a pedestrian is using, or waiting to use, a marked crosswalk, you must slow your vehicle or make a temporary stop and not interfere with their passage or walking. A pedestrian using a crosswalk has the right of way over vehicles at all times. If you are the pedestrian you must also utilize pedestrian signals.
- d. In general, you must be constantly on the watch for pedestrian while operating your vehicle. You must slow down when passing established safety zones on the right of the road, and you must be prepared to avert danger from other vehicles by driving defensively at all times.

- e. Any vehicle approaching a crosswalk is required to travel at such a speed as to be able to stop before entering the crosswalk if necessary, except when there are no pedestrians apparently attempting to cross it. When the pedestrian(s) is crossing or attempting to cross it ahead, the vehicle must stop and not interfere with the travel of the pedestrian(s).

21. Exception to Left Hand Traffic

On the road where no sidewalk is provided, pedestrians must keep to the right in principle; however, when it is dangerous to do so or it is unavoidable not to do so, pedestrians can walk along the left edge of the road. For example:

- a. When it is dangerous to walk due to a cliff on the right side.
- b. When the danger increases by having to cross the road several times to stop at several shops or other places.
- c. When the blind are guided by a seeing – eye dog that has been trained to keep to the left.
- d. When parked vehicles, etc., obstruct right hand traffic.
- e. Diagonal crossing at intersections is prohibited in principal; however, pedestrians can cross by way of diagonal crosswalks where they are provided.

22. Things to Remember

- a. Anything you are using your vehicle to go anywhere where alcohol is being served, ensure that you assign a designated driver to get everyone home safe. Make sure that your designated driver has a USFJ Form 4, so they can legally drive.
- b. When you are driving at nighttime during inclement weather you have to pay close attention to your driving. The Japanese do not use reflective material in their paint and the road markings tend to disappear when wet.
- c. Never follow another vehicle too close; it may stop suddenly. Always keep a safe distance from other vehicles so that you can stop in an emergency without having an accident.
- d. You must keep your interior dome light turned off while your vehicle is in motion. Exceptions are buses, taxies, and other vehicles that are permitted or required by law to keep their dome lights on.
- e. When approaching a raised bus island where passengers are loading or unloading, you must slow down to ten kilometers per hour. If passengers are debarking or loading where there is no raised bus island, you are required to come to a stop.
- f. When you hear a siren indicating that an emergency vehicle is approaching, you must pull over to the left as far as possible and come to a complete stop until the emergency vehicle has passed. On a one-way street or multilane road, it is permissible to stop on the right side so the emergency vehicle can proceed on the left.

If you are in an intersection you must move out of the intersection and pull over to the left and come to a complete stop until the emergency vehicle has passed.

- g.** There is one Japanese custom you are expected to follow if you should become involved in a fatality or personal injury accident – the “condolence procedure”. This is the Japanese custom of making a personal visit to the injured party (or family of the deceased) to express sympathy.
- h.** After each accident or mishap that results in the death of a Japanese National, whether suffered by an employee in connection with their employment or resulting from acts or performance of official duties, a representative of the unit or staff office (an approaching senior officer) should:

 - 1) Pay a call of condolence at the home for the deceased as expeditiously as possible.
 - 2) Express sympathy and regrets to the next of kin.
 - 3) Learn the desires of the family regarding attendance at the funeral.
 - 4) Attend the funeral, unless such an attendance conflicts with the expressed desires of the family.
 - 5) Present to the family before or during the funeral an appropriate floral tribute and/or a token money offering, if voluntary contributions are received which makes such an action possible. Customarily, money offerings are presented to the family of the deceased by guests at the funeral and are used to defray funeral expenses. The amount of the offering varies according to circumstances. The money is always presented in special wrapping available in most stationary stores.
- i.** In case of serious injury to one or more Japanese nationals, whether suffered by an employee in connection with their employment or resulting from acts or omissions by U.S. Armed Forces personnel acting in the performance of official duties, a representative of the unit or staff office should pay one or more comfort visits. Fruit or floral tributes, or a sum of money specially wrapped and voluntarily donated to defray known serious financial hardships faced by the family of the injured person(s) may be presented during these visits.
- j.** Gestures of sympathy should also be made when Japanese employees of the U.S. Armed Forces face serious personal or family misfortunes not listed above. It also shows good faith towards Japan and its people when Americans obey the laws of other countries as well as their own.
- k.** Military and civilian members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their dependents, who become involved in any accident or mishap that results in the death or serious injury, it is advised to:

 - 1) Make expressions of condolence similar to those described above. Unit commanders will determine the amount of the solarium payment to an individual on a case by case basis. Consideration will be given to the extent of the injury and the economic condition of the individual injured or, in the case of death, the

economic condition of the surviving family. The payment will be offered in the name of the unit or organization of the individual involved in the injury or death.

- 2) Consult with representatives of their insurance company before you initiate condolence actions relative to an incident arising from the operation of a privately owned vehicle.
 - l. During condolence actions, remarks that might be construed as an admission of liability should not be voiced.
 - m. The observance of these courtesies won't contribute to acceptance of guilt by you or an assumption you are responsible for the accident. It is an expression of sympathy only and it may be considerably important if legal action is taken against you.
 - n. If you are requiring additional information on condolence actions, contact your unit's legal assistance officer.

23. Traffic Point System

- a. The "Traffic Point System" is a method by which commander and supervisors may evaluate the driving habits and performance of personnel under their jurisdiction or administrative control.
- b. This system assesses specific points against the driving record of personnel who have been judged guilty of violating traffic laws, on or off U.S. installations. So if you are ticketed by the Japanese police, you will also have points assessed against your driver's license.
- c. The Military Police will advise the commander or supervisor of the accumulation of points on each traffic violation forwarded.
- d. The Commander/OIC'S or Supervisor will counsel the individual on safe driving practices and warn them that their privilege of operating a private motor vehicle is in jeopardy.
- e. When the violator's point accumulation reaches twelve, Traffic court, under the authority of the Commander, will revoke the driver's license and inform the violator's command of the action taken.
- f. Points assessed against an individual will remain in effect for a 24-month period. The expiration of a suspension period will cause the removal of all points assessed.
- g. If an individual is apprehended for operating a motor vehicle while his operator's permit is suspended, action will be taken to convert their suspension to a permanent revocation.

24. Traffic Fine Procedure

- a. The traffic fine system in Japan is a procedure under which a person who commits certain offenses in violation of the traffic laws to exempt from criminal prosecution by paying a sum of money fixed by law or ordinance at a Japanese post office or banking facility.

- b. If you violate any traffic law, a police official will give you a violation ticket, to include the sum of the traffic fine. If you have any doubt about the alleged violation, you may report to a senior police official and express your opinion.
- c. You may pay your traffic fine at a Japanese post office or at a bank having an agent of the Bank of Japan. Payment cannot be made directly to the Japanese police. Fines may be paid in two ways:
 - 1) You must pay your fine within seven days of receipt of the citation. (One day is added if the seventh day falls on a Sunday or a Japanese holiday). This system is called provisional payment.
 - 2) In some instances, you may be required to report to a senior police official at the police station designated on your violation ticket, (within ten days, if a specific date to report is not listed on your ticket) prior to paying your fine. If you do not report to the police station or pay your fine as outlined in (1) above, a notification will be mailed to you by certified mail. When this notification is mailed, you must pay the certified postal charge in addition to your traffic fine.
- d. If you fail to pay your traffic fine, the Japanese Courts may prosecute you under regular criminal procedures and possible criminal punishment.

25. Offenses and Fines.

Traffic tickets issued by Japanese police will indicate the offense and the amount of the fine. In rare cases, the amount of the fine shown on the traffic ticket may be changed at the Notification Center, and you could be either reimbursed for making an overpayment or required to pay an additional cost.

AND...SO

Use common sense at all times, whether you are driving or walking. Don't forget the simple things such as closing the doors on your vehicles and using all safety devices that you may have in your vehicle. Avoid jumping from moving vehicles or hanging out the window.

By showing your respect for Japanese traffic laws, you become a good personal ambassador to Japan. This respect will further cement the harmonious relations between the United States and Japan. This will reveal our good faith towards Japan and her people by proving Americans obey the laws of other countries as well as their own.



SECTION THREE
MOTORCYCLES, MOPEDS, AND ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES

1. Definition

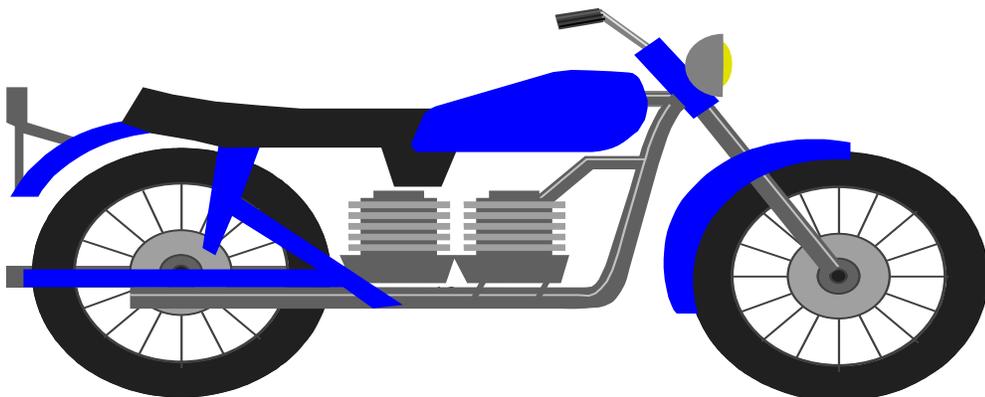
The term “Motorcycle” applies to all motorcycles, motor-scooters, motorized bicycles, mopeds or motor-assisted two or three wheel conveyances to include all-terrain vehicles.

2. Registration and Licensing Requirements

The following are step by step instructions to register a motorcycle and obtain an operator’s permit.

- a. The individual must be at least 18 years old, and possess a valid USFJ Form 4 driver’s permit.
- b. After purchasing the motorcycle, the individual must obtain Japanese Compulsory Insurance, Property Liability Insurance and Road Tax (a detailed explanation is contained in the Motor Vehicle Registration Article of this Code), and register the motorcycle with the vehicle registration office (VRO) at security.
- c. Bring registration paperwork both insurance forms and your motorcycle to the licensing office to register for the Motorcycle Rider Course (MRC). This course is approved by the Naval Safety Center and includes classroom session, written examination, and a driving test. Once you have passed a (MRC) and safety inspection, you will be issued a temporary license and plate for on base use only to be able to practice for 30 days. * If you have a motorcycle endorsement on your U.S. drivers license and/or have taken a course within the past three years, please bring one or both to the licensing office with the rest of your paperwork. If you are a new rider, no state side endorsement you may only purchase a 400cc or below and practice on base for the first year. Once you have ridden accident free for the first year you may purchase a larger motorcycle but you will have to go through the MRC on the larger sized motorcycle. If you do not meet the above conditions and ride double on a motorcycle, you face a penalty of less than 100,000 yen. (12,000 yen fine, + 2 points in addition).
- d. Confirmation of sign up for the MRC should be taken to Security Pass and ID Office. They will issue a temporary pass which allows the individual to operate the motorcycle ON BASE ONLY. This pass is valid for 90 days to allow time to complete the MRC. If the MRC has not been completed within 90 days, an extension of 30 days should be requested at the same office.

The More You Know, The Better It Gets !!



- e. Students must furnish their own motorcycle and wear all safety equipment described in the paragraph3, a-e below while operating a motorcycle.
- f. Students not meeting the above requirements will not be allowed to participate in the course.
- g. Individuals found operating a motorcycle off base with an “ON BASE ONLY” pass will not be allowed to participate in the MRC, and are subject to administrative and / or disciplinary action.
- h. Upon successful completion of the MRC, members will be issued a course completion certificate. Motorcycle operator’s permits will be classified in four size categories: 1 through 99cc, 1 through 299cc, 1 through 699cc, and all sizes. The permit issued will be restricted to the size category of the motorcycle used for the MRC. To upgrade an operator’s permit to a larger size motorcycle will require the individual to attend the range portion of the MRC or the Experienced Rider Course (ERC). The individual must have the larger size motorcycle in order to participate in the course. All newly licensed riders will be enrolled in a mentorship program following the basic riding course (BRC).

3. Mandatory Riding Gear for Passenger

- a. A properly fastened (under the chin) protective helmet that covers the back of the skull and meets the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), American National Standards Institute (ANSI). The use of retro-reflective tape or decals on helmets significantly improves the visibility of the motorcyclists to others. Afloat and tenant activities are encouraged to purchase retro-reflective tape for the motorcyclists. * Helmet must be at least ¾ or full face size.* **STRONGLY** recommend and suggest purchasing a DOT helmet prior to arriving to Japan. Japanese helmets are approved for use in the country, but the construction and standards are of inferior specifications to U.S. DOT standards.
- b. Properly worn eye protection devices which are (impact or shatter resistant goggles, or full-face shield attached to the helmet) . A windshield or faring is not considered to be a proper eye protection.
- c. Properly worn long sleeved shirt or jacket, long legged trousers and full finger gloves.
- d. Properly worn, over the ankle hard-soled shoes (No tennis/basketball shoes).
- e. Properly worn (as an outer garment) yellow or lime green vest with at minimum 138 sq inches of reflective vertical and horizontal retro-reflective stripes front to back.

4. Operating Conditions

- a. Headlights will be on at all times (on and off base).
- b. Operators of two-wheeled vehicles having an “ON BASE ONLY” pass or are newly licensed are prohibited from carrying passengers. After one year, passenger endorsement can be obtained after Experienced Rider Course completion.

5. Traffic Accidents

If the motorcycle operator is found at fault for a traffic accident, he / she is subsequently required to complete the MRC.

6. FMI.

For additional information contact the Licensing Office, 252-2704.